

Approved 4/27/06

January 13, 2006

The following action minutes are listed as they were acted upon by the Planning Commission and as listed on the agenda for the Planning Commission Retreat of January 13, 2006 together with the staff reports attached thereto and incorporated therein by reference.

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Sarah Christie, Bruce Gibson, Penny Rappa, Bob Roos and Chairman Gene Mehlschau

Staff Present: Vic Holanda, Warren Hoag, Pat Beck, Kami Griffin, Dana Lilly, Matt Janssen, Chuck Stevenson, John Euphrat, Richard Marshall, Jim Orton, Tim McNulty

Welcome/Opening Remark: Planning Director, Planning Commission chairperson.

Public Comment:

Anne McMahan: thanks commissioners for all of their hard work. Offers suggestions for the study session today and a future one on the effectiveness of the county Agricultural land protection policies. Discusses the Central Coast Ag Network (CCCAN) and states they want to create greater demand for regionally grown produce through promotion of regionally grown produce.

Mr. Holanda: looks forward to the retreat today. Hopes we can work together to accomplish a great year.

Chairman Mehlschau welcomes everyone.

On motion of Commissioner Christie, seconded by Ms. Rappa, and unanimously carried, to move up Planning Commission discussion of how they see their role as commissioners.

Kami Griffin: quotes Bill Brummel "Imagine we are all the same. Imagine we agree about politics, religion and morality. Imagine we like the same types of music, art, food and coffee. Imagine we all look alike. Sound boring? Differences need not divide us. Embrace diversity. Dignity is everyone's human rights".

1. **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION OF HOW THEY SEE THEIR ROLE AS COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Rappa: discusses the experience she brings to the Commission.

Commissioner Gibson: states the commissioner's have their defined roles and states he has worked with land use issues for many years.

Commissioner Roos: represents District 1 and states it is his role to enforce environmental and land use policies. States being a commissioner is very interesting.

Commissioner Christie: discusses her love of this county. States she wants stronger environmental laws to protect what we are losing. Feels she is representing the whole county not just her district.

Commissioner Mehlschau: Is from a farming background. He would like to keep Ag profitable. He believes in giving the applicant a fair hearing and protecting property rights.

Commissioner Rappa: states it is difficult to know who the public is. There is the same small group of people that participate at the hearings. We need to encourage the public to become educated and participate more at the meeting.

Commissioner Gibson: states he would like to develop a vision for the county and get better plans in place regarding the environmental issues. He states he would like the advisory councils to be encouraged to work together.

Commissioner Christie: encourages planning staff not to take criticism personally at the advisory council meetings.

2. SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON REVISIONS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAWS; MEETING AND SITE VIEWING PROTOCOLS; MEETING TELECONFERENCING.

Commissioners discuss changes to the by-laws. **Item 1 MEETINGS**, the changes made to Section C approved as presented; Section E, last sentence, delete "at the discretion of the Chairperson and", after the word "continued". Commissioners discuss Section F regarding teleconferencing and the need to keep the location in the County of San Luis Obispo with changes to Section F approved as presented. **Item III ATTENDANCE** Changes to Section D and E approved as presented. **Item V CONDUCTING BUSINESS**, the changes to Sections E, F and G are accepted with new numbering. Commissioners discuss their concerns regarding ex parte contacts and with staff to change the language in section L and bring it back to the commission for consideration at a regular meeting. There is also discussion of Condition L regarding the addition of Conditional Use Permit in the third sentence of Section L. **(VI) AGENDAS** addition of a new Section C regarding corrections to staff reports for agenda items to be transmitted to the Commissioners at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting approved as presented.

3. BROWN ACT ROUNDTABLE WITH COUNTY COUNSEL

Jim Orton: County Counsel, comments on the Ralph M. Brown Act handout regarding "What is a meeting"; "What is not a meeting"; "Individual conversations"; "Conferences"; Community meetings held by someone other than the County"; "Meetings of other County bodies"; Special gatherings"; Meetings of standing committees"; "Written bylaws or rules"; Agenda posting"; "Exceptions to agenda posting"; "Protection for member of the public"; "Secret ballots are prohibited"; "Misdemeanor penalty"; and "Political Reform Act of 1974". He discusses the last page of the handout and states when a commissioner disqualifies himself or herself from a project, they need to leave the room.

Two members of the public are now present: Marie Lorca and Susan Harvey.

There is discussion regarding the need of the public not having to register their name to be allowed to speak.

4. PROCEDURAL TOPICS: FORMAT OF MINUTES, TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS, ETC

The commissioners agree that action minutes are acceptable. The commissioners request that one person to be the point of contact for correspondence. Request that the clerk mark all letters received by e-mail as copies or new letters and separate them into stacks. Hard copy gets copied. They would like to revisit this request in 3 months. Travel Reimbursement is discussed with the addition of sentence regarding the name of the county travel agency in the County Travel Policy.

Commissioners discuss the possibility of limiting the time given applicants or agents on the presentation of their project. The Chairman should ask the applicant or agent the time he/she requires to present the project and inform them there is a time limit, with 10 minutes being the average time. A time limit for commissioners is discussed. There is further discussion regarding the possibility of the commissioners not asking questions of the public until after everyone speaks, unless it is a chair for an advisory council.

LUNCH BREAK

RECONVENE

5. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

Kami Griffin, staff, presents procedural steps of review process, explaining how concerns of the applicant are addressed. Appeal process explained and discussed. Commissioner Rappa requests clarification on Interagency Coordination in regards to referral agencies with staff responding

6. PC DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORT AND PRESENTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Commissioner Roos: discusses his prior experience with finding errors and inefficiencies in staff reports. Discussion ensues regarding similar experiences with other commissioners. Commissioners discuss their interpretations of staff reports, and challenges they find therein. Opinions are exchanged regarding various styles of staff reports written. Suggestions are made between commissioners drawing upon previous experience with interpretation challenges. Commissioner Christie requests having a biological report included in all staff reports. Commissioner Gibson requests having a location map of the project at the beginning of staff report. Commissioners discuss the order of the staff report. Consistency, accuracy, and substance in a staff report are addressed as a concern of the commissioners. Staff report presentation discussed in regards to the amount of time a project takes to present. Continued items are requested to be noted at the beginning of agenda the item is placed on.

7. STATUS REPORT ON PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSIONS

Warren Hoag: staff, requests this item be discussed more fully at a study session to be placed on a future agenda of a regular meeting. Future agendaized study session items

information given. Interagency attendance at study sessions discussed. Study session regarding Ag preservation policy program goal achievement issues requested by Commissioners Gibson and Christie. Victor Holanda discusses concerns brought forth by the Board of Supervisors regarding effectiveness of programs, and challenges regarding identification of policy makers. **Linda Auchinachie**, Agriculture Department, discusses Agriculture Programs.

8. LONG RANGE PLANNING INITIATIVES

John Euphrat: staff, discusses initiatives. **Chuck Stevenson**, staff, discusses Smart Growth implementation and presents handouts. Commissioner Rappa expresses concerns regarding the public's conception of the county's Smart Growth program. Commissioner Gibson expresses his satisfaction with the Community 2050 meetings. Growth management discussed. The challenges of limitation in growth management discussed. Richard Marshall suggests to Chuck Stevenson that when going to the Board of Supervisors on key issues to stress inclusion of the Public Works Department in the discussion as appropriate. Copies of results from the "Opinion Studies" survey regarding Smart Growth discussed. Polling results of Community 2050 workshops handed out. Chuck Stevenson, staff, states the P&B Dept. will be going before the BOS with a budget request proposal to study and develop a Rural Area Plan. Commissioner Rappa suggests having a joint session meeting with the BOS on this subject. Dana Lilly, staff, discusses opinion studies, concept proposals, and affordable housing constructive notice publication. Victor Holanda discusses departmental budgetary limits, staffing/funding resources, and sanctioning of issues the department is authorized to work on.

9. PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION OF THEIR VISION AND DESIRES FOR THE COUNTY IN THE NEXT YEAR, IN FIVE YEARS, AND BEYOND

Commissioner Roos: talks about discussions he has had with constituents and ideas they give him regarding changes they would like to see implemented in Planning Commission meetings. States he would like the public educated regarding Planning Department visions.

Commissioner Christie: would like to see Board of Supervisors develop the political will to "do the right thing" regardless of special interest groups. Cumulatively she would like to see implementation of effective policies to preserve agricultural land. Would like to see reality-based affordable housing. States she would like stronger protections for Coastal habitats.

Chairman Mehlschau: discusses concerns with labeling laws for produce. States we need to keep agriculture profitable or else agricultural landowners will sell out to more profitable methods of income. Shares with us his experience in transition from private vehicle to public transportation. Expresses his concerns for promoting Smart Growth, more effectively, educating the public is essential.

Commissioner Rappa: discusses state growth, population expansion, traffic impacts, and development occurring in areas she feels need to be kept open. She would like to see concentrated development implemented contractually between the county and the cities and discusses economical challenges for the county and the cities in doing so. States she believes housing affordability is important, however, the challenges involving bureaucracy should not make the process difficult, time consuming, and expensive.

Commissioner Gibson: states his passion is agricultural preservation, and feels this is fundamental to the economics of this county. Feels he, as a decision maker, refers to community knowledge to assist him. Along those lines, he would like to see the community educated. He would like to see the Board of Supervisors educated as well. Education is key for all. Would like all the policies of the General Plan available in one place.

10. WRAP UP/CLOSING REMARKS:

Victor Holanda states this meeting has been very constructive. States agriculture land preservation comments are high on the priority list. Agrees with all comments regarding education.

Chairman Mehlschau asks commission how often they feel a Retreat would benefit them with consensus on this retreat being annually in addition to workshops or study sessions at regular commission meetings.

ADJOURN at 4:00 p.m.